



Parra Notes

May 5, 2006

Hello Friends:

WEEKLY HIGHLIGHT

Last night, I voted for the passage of a series of **bonds**, totaling \$37.281 billion, for placement on the November ballot. This public works bond package, the largest in state history, will improve the **state's roads, schools, levees, and provide affordable housing**.

When this debate began in March, I said I would not support any bond measures that did not give the Valley what it deserves and what it needs. Although we do need more, these bonds at least get us moving in the right direction because they will offer enhancements to **Highway 99**, help our **schools**, improve our **levees**, and provide **farm worker housing**. These bonds are certainly not the final product that the Valley is long overdue in receiving, but they show progress. They show that people are finally starting to look at the concerns and issues that are facing one of California's most underserved regions.

The following bills comprise the complete package of bonds that will be placed on the November ballot:

- ✓ **Transportation (SB 1266)** – \$19.925 billion;
- ✓ **Education (AB 127)** – \$10.416 billion;
- ✓ **Flood Protection (AB 140)** – \$4.09 billion; and
- ✓ **Housing (SB 1689)** – \$2.850 billion.

In addition, the **Assembly** approved \$500 million in general funds for levee repair (**AB 142**) as well as a constitutional amendment (**SCA 7**) to protect Proposition 42, which guarantees funds from the gas tax go to improve the state's highways.

The **Assembly** also passed two policy bills. They include:

AB 1039, which streamlines environmental regulations for repairing levees and the seismic retrofitting of bridges and **AB 1467**, which establishes public/private partnerships for goods movement.

Also approved was **AB 1540**, a technical bill that provides a ballot label for the constitutional amendment.

I commend my **Republican** and **Democratic** colleagues in coming together to support such an important investment in our future. This is a bi-partisan agreement that will be good for the Valley, and I also commend **Speaker Nunez** for his leadership throughout the bond negotiations.

NOW, TO THE REST OF MY WEEK IN SACRAMENTO

To start out the week, I led a conference call in which a number of law enforcement officials from the **30th Assembly District** participated. We discussed a request by the **State Department of Justice** for \$6.03 million and 31 positions for the **California Methamphetamine Strategy Program (CALMS)**. Specifically, we examined how this money and these additional positions would be used to combat methamphetamine production in the Central Valley. Although the frequency of large scale methamphetamine production has decreased in the Valley,

more and more, we are finding that production is happening in places like garages and apartments. It is still a significant problem, but I know that we are making progress.

The officials on the call were: **California High Patrol (CHP) Officer Jerry Pierce; Lieutenant Doug Pruder and Sergeant Frank Smith**, from the **Hanford CHP office**; **Sheriff Allan McClain** from **Kings County**; **Chief Reuben Shortnacy** and **Commander Randy Leach** from **Corcoran**; and **Chief Carlos Mestas** from **Hanford**. I would like to thank everyone for taking the time to join me on the call.

This week, I also sat on a hearing of the **Budget Subcommittee No. 4**, during which my colleagues and I dealt with issues relating to the Department of Justice (DOJ), the California Gambling Commission (CGC), the Office of Emergency Services (OES), the Office of Homeland Security (OHS), and a host of other state agencies.

Budget Subcommittee Number 4 deals with issues relating to state administration and governance.

To access the Committee's agendas or archives, please visit the **Assembly's** web site www.assembly.ca.gov and click on "**Committee Directory**," after which follow the link to "**Committee on the Budget**."

I also had the chance to meet with **Randy Ghan** and a coalition of **labor leaders and representatives from Fresno**. The group made the trek to Sacramento as part of a legislative conference in which they were participating. We talked about a number of legislative and budgetary concerns relating to labor issues.

If you would like to find out more about **organized labor** in the **Fresno area**, I encourage you to check the following web site: <http://www.fresnoalliance.com/>. To find a comprehensive list of labor organizations, click on the link titled, "**Community Alliance**."

Representatives from the **California Bicycle Coalition** also paid me a visit to let me know about some of their legislative priorities and concerns, especially about their call for more bike path funding. The **California Bicycling Coalition** is an advocacy group that works to improve bicycling conditions in California.

To read more about this organization and the work they do, please take a look at their web site <http://www.calbike.org/>

Also this week, representatives from the **California Faculty Association (CFA)**, came by my office to converse about budgetary issues as they affect **California State University (CSU)**. Specifically, we touched on the need to fully fund the **CSU** system, especially additional funding for outreach programs.

To find out more information about the **CFA**, please go to their web site at <http://www.calfac.org/>

Later in the week, I took a meeting with the **California Association of Mortgage Brokers (CAMB)**. At the meeting, the **CAMB** presented me with their "**consumer protection package**," which includes:

- **AJR 47 (Assemblyman Mark Ridley-Thomas)**: This bill acknowledges the high cost of housing in California and declares California a high cost state. The resolution also encourages **Congress** and the **President** to enact legislation that raises loan limits.
- **AB 790 (Assemblyman Leland Yee)**: This bill would make it a licensing violation for any **Department of Real Estate** licensee who knowingly misrepresents a loan originator's business, education, training, or expertise in order to mislead customers to generate business.
- **AB 2890 (Assemblyman Mark Ridley-Thomas)**: This bill would allow the **Department of Corporations** to remove from employment any employee of a mortgage lending corporation licensee who willingly misrepresents their personal training, certifications, or expertise in order to mislead customers to generate business without knowledge by the corporation.

For additional information about the **CAMB**, please take a look at their web site <http://www.cambweb.org/>

Representatives from the **Fresno County Special Education Local Plan Area (SELPA)** spent time discussing

with me the importance of additional funding for special education programs. Two specific points the group conveyed dealt with their need for a secured financing scheme and the need for more speech and language pathologists. I look forward to working with them in securing the funding they need in upcoming budget negotiations.

.....
Kern County Supervisor, Jon McQuiston also paid me a follow-up visit this week. We revisited the discussion we had about his trip to Washington D.C., where he was working on military issues and we also discussed how infrastructure bonds could help support the military mission in California.

If you would like to read more about the work being done by **Supervisor McQuiston**, please visit his web site at <http://www.co.kern.ca.us/bos/dist1/>

.....
The **U.S. Congress** developed **Part D** to provide Medicare participants with an insurance program that pays some or all of the cost of your prescription drugs. Unfortunately, the program is very confusing. That is why I hosted an informational workshop regarding this subject at the **Bakersfield Senior Center**. I am glad a number of people came out to learn more about what their enrollment options are, especially given the upcoming deadline of May 15 for people to sign up.

I would like to thank **Essie Blue** for allowing us to use the **Senior Center**, our volunteers from **County Adult Services** and **Greater Bakersfield Legal Aid**, and **Bill Andrews** and **Nerissa Robinson** from **Bakersfield District Office**.

.....
COMMUNITY HIGHLIGHT

Becca's Closet was created as a legacy to **Becca Kirtman** and the project she started at her high school in Florida. **Becca** was killed in a car accident a few years ago, but her project lives on. There is now an official chapter of **Becca's Closet** on the **Hanford High School Campus**. **Becca's Closet** provides formal attire to high school girls who otherwise would not be able to attend their prom/formal because they cannot purchase a dress.

Becca's Closet is run by students in the **Hanford High School Partnership Academy** and dresses can be tried on, and given out, by appointment. Please come by **Room 554 (Mrs. Smith's room)** before school, at snack, or at lunch if you would like to find out about getting a dress for the next formal dance.

Anyone in the community, or any student, who would like to donate a gently used formal can help out, too. **Please call Carol Smith at 559-583-5902, ext. 8414**, or send an e-mail to csmith@hjuhsd.k12.ca.us for more information. They can arrange for pick-up or drop-off of your donations. I encourage everybody to help out with this great cause, because we can make a difference in a lot of girls' lives.

.....
COMMUNITY HIGHLIGHT

The **California Coalition for Youth's (CCY)** mission is to be the **PLACE** that improves and empowers the lives of California's youth by:

- **Partnering with youth**
- **Linking with youth-serving programs throughout California**
- **Advocating for youth rights**
- **Connecting youth to resources**
- **Educating communities, policymakers, and stakeholders**

The **CCY** also coordinates a statewide, toll free, 24-hour, confidential phone crisis line available to young people between the ages of 12-24, and concerned friends and family members. **CCY** provides crisis intervention counseling on many issues including family problems, sexual assault, eating disorders, teen pregnancy, substance abuse, suicide and more. **CCY** offers support, encouragement, and referrals to youth needing assistance or in crisis situations. The **California Youth Crisis Line** connects an average of 12,000 callers with vital resources annually. Agencies as well as young adults from every county in California use the **Crisis Line's toll-free number, 1-800-843-5200**.

.....
INTERESTING LINK

I would like to direct everyone to a very interesting and educational web site, www.leginfo.ca.gov. In accessing this web site, which is even used by many seasoned legislative veterans in Sacramento, people can learn more about the legislative process and the kinds of bills being carried by members of the legislature. People can also find the contact information for a given member....or if you do not know who your representatives are, you can find out that information, too.

I hope you check this site out, because it can serve as a tremendous resource, especially for students working on their social studies and civics homework and projects!!!!

NEED HOMEWORK HELP?

The **California State Library** has made available through their website a new service called **Live Homework Help**. This service enables students to connect on-line with a tutor for assistance with homework questions. Supported by Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) federal funding, students can access Live Homework Help through [28 California public libraries](http://www.library.ca.gov/tutor/). It is important to note that the tutors who respond to student questions are screened, trained, and closely monitored.

Live Homework Help is easy! Log on to <http://www.library.ca.gov/tutor/> from your computer any time between 1:00 p.m. and 10:00 p.m. and follow the simple setup instructions.

MEETING REQUESTS

If you or your organization would like to set up a time to meet with me or would like for me to attend an event you are sponsoring, please feel free to contact my **Executive Secretary Ellen Manolis** at (916) 319-2030 or by e-mail at Ellen.Manolis@asm.ca.gov.

INTERNS WANTED

I am accepting applications for the internship program in my **Hanford, Bakersfield** and **Sacramento** offices. Candidates should be residents of the **30th Assembly District**, possess solid research and communication skills, and have a strong interest in public policy and political issues facing the **Central Valley**. Applications can be found by going to: <http://democrats.assembly.ca.gov/members/a30>.

For Hanford office internships contact **Richard Valle** at (559) 585-7170 or by e-mail at Richard.Valle@asm.ca.gov.

For Bakersfield office internships contact **Paula DeLaRiva** at (661) 334-3745 or by e-mail at Paula.DeLaRiva@asm.ca.gov.

For Sacramento office internships contact **Brandon Sanders** at (916) 319-2030 or by e-mail at Brandon.Sanders@asm.ca.gov.

ON THIS DAY IN HISTORY

1494: Christopher Columbus sighted Jamaica on his second trip to the Western Hemisphere. He named the island Santa Gloria.

1821: Napoleon Bonaparte died on the island of St. Helena, where he had been in exile.

1865: The Thirteenth Amendment was ratified, abolishing slavery in the U.S.

1904: The third perfect game of the major leagues was thrown by Cy Young (Boston Red Sox) against the Philadelphia Athletics. It was the first perfect game under modern rules.

1945: The Netherlands and Denmark were liberated from Nazi control.

1987: The U.S. congressional Iran-Contra hearings opened.

Bakersfield Office:

601 24th St.,
Suite A
Bakersfield, CA 93301
Phone: (661) 334-3745
Fax: (661) 334-3796

Hanford Office:

321 N. Douty St.,
Suite B
Hanford, CA 93230
Phone: (559) 585-7170
Fax: (559) 585-7175

Capitol Office:

State Capitol
P.O. Box 942849
Sacramento, CA 94249
Phone: (916) 319-2030
Fax: (916) 319-2130

Email: Assemblymember.Parra@assembly.ca.gov
Web Site: <http://democrats.assembly.ca.gov/members/a30/>

If you wish to no longer receive email notifications please click the following link to [UNSUBSCRIBE](#)
If you wish to receive email updates in the future please click the following link to [SUBSCRIBE](#)